

Fact Sheet

The President's Fiscal 2001 Immigration Budget

2/7/00 (rev.)

Immigration Services

In FY 1999, INS met its naturalization (N-400) goal by completing more than 1.2 million naturalization applications—a 105-percent increase over the number of applications completed the previous fiscal year. The agency is now on track to meet its FY 2000 goal of completing 1.3 million naturalization applications, which will mean a national average processing time of six months. The agency is also positioned to take on other immigration benefit caseloads more effectively, such as adjustment-of-status (I-485) applications. In FY 2000, INS plans to complete 500,000 adjustment-of-status applications—a 67 percent increase from the number of applications completed during the previous fiscal year.

To sustain this effort in FY 2001, the INS budget includes \$807 million for the Examinations Fee Account (funded solely through the collection of fees from applicants) and projects \$127.3 million in a new account, the Immigration Services Capital Investment Account (ISCIA). With these resources, INS will maintain the six-month processing for naturalization applications and continue to reduce the adjustment of status backlog by completing 600,000 applications.

In FY 2001, INS is proposing a voluntary Premium Service Fee of \$1,000 for business cases, which will guarantee processing within 15 days. This initiative will provide businesses with an option to the regular processing of business cases which currently take from 60 days to more than one year, depending upon the form type and the servicing office. INS estimates that for FY 2001 the proposed Premium Service Fee could generate an estimated \$80 million in additional revenue.

Of the \$80 million generated, \$25 million will be dedicated to guaranteeing the premium service and benefit fraud deterrence, and the remaining funds applied to capital investment items. Details on this new fee will be included in a proposed rule to be published in the *Federal Register* and will invite public comment before implementation.

Improving Services and Preventing Fraud

\$25 million of the Premium Service Fee would provide the expedited service for businesses. This funding also will increase resources dedicated to detecting and investigating benefits fraud, which includes production and use of fraudulent documents and misrepresentation of eligibility to illegally apply for immigration benefits. Enhanced activities in anti-fraud operations will include checking evidentiary submissions, initiating field investigations as needed, and expanding data sharing with other agencies.

Other service improvement efforts include \$1.5 million for citizenship testing as part of the ongoing reengineering of the naturalization process that began in 1997. The resources in the FY 2001 budget will enable INS to contract for the development of a new test, designed to ensure that naturalization applicants undergo consistent, uniform testing procedures. **(\$25 million)**

New Capital Investment Account

For the first time, INS is establishing a fund, the Immigration Services Capital Investment Account (ISCIA), to address ongoing infrastructure needs that are not currently covered by application fees. This funding in the ISCIA would be used solely for funding infrastructure improvements and addressing immigration benefit backlogs, supporting systems upgrades, and supplying information to customers, such as INS' new nationwide toll-free hotline. INS is anticipating \$127.3 million in the ISCIA from direct appropriations (\$34.8 million); portions of a new voluntary Premium Service Fee (\$55 million), permitting businesses to pay for accelerated processing of employment-related applications; and a portion of the funding from re-authorization of a permanent 245(i) adjustment-of-status program (\$37.5 million). **(\$127.3 million)**

FY 2001 Initiatives

(\$ in millions)

Initiative	S&E	Exams	Total
Improving Services and Preventing Fraud	\$ –	\$25.0	\$25.0
Immigration Services Capital Investment Account	34.8	92.5	127.3
TOTAL	\$34.8	\$117.5	\$152.3